

I have been licensed as a technician for amateur radio for over 2 years . I primarily use it when sailing. I do not use Morse code. Technologies are changing and the code requirement for a general license is unwarranted, especially for people who use SSB for marine use. Most sailing nets are on frequencies restricted to generals. This summer I listened to these frequencies and would have liked to participate in the voluntary tracking of vessels in the Pacific that occurs on these nets but could not do so legally. This is a safety issue for mariners in small boats. Even if I complete the code I will not keep it up and will not be able to read it with any accuracy. This is particularly true since most amateurs who still do send code do not do so at 5WPM. While in an emergency broadcast can be done on general license frequencies the lack of experience of operators with those frequencies on their radios is a safety concern. I strongly encourage you to drop the code requirement for this purpose for a general license on safety grounds. Even the generals I know often use code reading devices to help them read code. Other generals who have not done code for years would have difficulty reading it because of the lack of practice. It is a very outdated requirement that is little more than a recreational activity.